

Kentucky Teacher

August 2006

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov

Stacie Hoene
North Oldham High School
10 years in the classroom



Photo by Rick McComb

First-year teacher Rachel Mattingly worked with student Alexis Bradshaw last spring on reading skills in her classroom at Evan Harlow Elementary in Harrodsburg Independent Schools. The district merged in July with Mercer County Schools bringing the number of Kentucky public school districts to 175.

Education professor offers advice to beginning teachers

By Mary Lou Yeatts
Murray State University

For the past five years, I have been teaching graduate students in Educational Studies, Leadership and Counseling at Murray State University. Each year, I speak to an elite group of young women and men who are about to embark into the world of teaching.

Seeing their bright eyes and smiles lets me know that the world WILL be a better place when they begin their teaching careers. I can see the eagerness in their demeanors that yells, "Just give me my own classroom!"

These students have completed many hours of field study, seminars and student teaching, as well as other curriculum courses. They are ready.

Each time I prepare to speak to a group of these students, I always ask myself, "What is it that I wish I had known before I started teaching?" Each time as I reflect, I realize that it is not the big stuff that will get new teachers, it's the small stuff.

My first piece of advice is to "STAY OUT OF THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE" to avoid

the negative people who want to bring a first-year teacher down. I warn the graduates that the teachers' lounge is where they'll hear all types of complaints about teaching and other teachers. I remind these soon-to-be teachers that teachers often can be their own worst enemies.

Teaching IS the best job on Earth. What other profession gives one person the opportunity to make such a difference in a child's life, have fun all day, laugh, cry and have a snotty nose wiped on your leg? Where else can you counsel with students about college prep, tech prep or what they are going to wear to the prom?

I truly believe that the answer to raising the standard in our profession begins with attitude! My ideas for adopting the right attitude are simple: Be honest, sensible, positive and organized. Set high expectations for staff and students. Keep accurate records. Continually read about your profession. Talk to your principal, and keep confidential matters confidential.

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New board makes decisions, learns about education issues

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

The newly configured Kentucky State Board of Education convened its first official business meeting in June. The six new members and one reappointed member joined the four veteran board members to make final decisions regarding the state's Program of Studies and to discuss the status of public education in Kentucky. (See Page 11 for more information on new members.)

The board voted to revise the regulation that governs "The Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Grades P-12," as approved by the state board at its April meeting. The document outlines the minimum requirements for content standards at all grade levels in a variety of content areas.

After a presentation on the Statement of Consideration from a public hearing and further review, the board voted to revise language in the social studies section of the Program of Studies. The revision refers to dates exclusively using the B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini, the year of the Lord) designations.

The time designations of B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era) will not be a part of state law within the

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Learn more about the department's efforts to improve communications with Kentucky educators — Page 10

Revised curriculum documents will guide 2007 state assessments

By Faun S. Fishback

faun.fishback@education.ky.gov

Revisions to Kentucky's two most important curriculum documents await educators returning to the classroom. During the past 12 months, teachers from throughout Kentucky have helped the Kentucky Department of Education update "The Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Grades P-12 (2006)" and "Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment."

The revisions were made to include current research and to align the documents to current national standards so that Kentucky educators have updated information as they prepare their curricula for this school year and beyond. In addition, the documents help teachers find more resources for instruction and understand what content students need to learn and know at each level to be successful.

The Program of Studies outlines the minimum content standards required for all stu-

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Bulletin Board



Photo by Rick McComb

John Hardin High School (Hardin County)

Bulletin Board is compiled by Joy Barr
joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Conferences

Environmental Education

The Kentucky Association for Environmental Education will hold its 30th annual conference Sept. 8-9 at the Radisson Hotel in Covington.

www.kaee.org/conference.htm

School councils

The Kentucky Association of School Councils will hold its annual conference Sept. 20-21 at the Marriott Louisville Downtown. "Seizing Success: Sharing What Works" is the conference theme.

www.kasc.net/conference.htm

Reading

The Kentucky Reading Association will hold its annual conference Sept. 21-23 in Louisville. "Learning, Leading and Living Literacy" is the theme.

www.louisville.edu/edu/kra

Middle school

The Kentucky Middle School Association's annual conference is Sept. 24-26 at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington.

www.kmsaonline.com

Social studies

The Kentucky Council for the Social Studies will hold its annual conference Sept. 27-28 at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Lexington.

www.kcss.org

Media and libraries

The Kentucky School Media Association and the Kentucky Library Association will hold their joint conference Sept. 27-30 at the Marriott Louisville Downtown.

www.kysma.org

Health and physical education

The Kentucky Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance has set Nov. 8-10 for its annual convention at the Hyatt Regency Lexington. "Work in Progress: Coming Together and Staying on Course" is the theme.

www.kahperd.com

Events

Stage One

Stage One in Louisville announces its upcoming productions for school groups:

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" is based on the book by Lewis Carroll. Recommended for grades PK-5; performances are Oct. 10-Nov. 19.

"The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes" is based upon the stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Recommended for grades 5-12; performances are Oct. 26-Nov. 19.

All performances are at the Kentucky Center, Bomhard Theater at 10 a.m. and noon. Tickets are \$6.

Contact: Box office, (502) 562-0161

www.stageone.org/season

State Fair

Don't forget to book a field trip to the Kentucky State Fair, Aug. 17-27 in Louisville. School groups can explore topics in science and social studies at the Kaleidoscope Discovery Zone learning exhibit.

www.kystatefair.org

Legislators' back-to-school program

Members of the Kentucky General Assembly participate in the America's Legislators Back to School program by visiting Kentucky classrooms Sept. 17-23. State lawmakers will share ideas, listen to concerns and help students better understand the legislative process and how it develops public policy. Lesson plans are available at www.ncsl.org/public/backsch.htm on the Internet.

For information about the event in Kentucky, contact the state coordinator, Sheila Mason, at the Legislative Research Commission, (502) 564-8100 or by e-mail at sheila.mason@lrc.ky.gov.

Kentucky Book Fair

The 25th annual Kentucky Book Fair is set for Nov. 11 at the Frankfort Convention Center. Teachers and librarians will receive a 20 percent discount on purchases made with a Pro Card or purchase order at the special preview day for educators and librarians on Nov. 10 or on the day of the fair.

www.kybookfair.com

Louisville Orchestra

The Louisville Orchestra announces its upcoming education programs for Kentucky students:

"Midsummer Night's Dream," is a classics concert for middle and high school students on Oct. 26 at 10:30 a.m.

"Latin America" is a rhythm-paced concert introducing middle and high school students to the music and culture of Latin America. Performances are Jan. 31 and Feb. 2, 2007, at 10:30 a.m.

"Making MUSIC," appropriate for 4th and 5th graders, will integrate reading and music into core content. Funded in part by Jefferson County Public Schools, the concerts in 2007 will be Feb. 6, 13-16, 21 and March 6-8 at 10:30 a.m. and noon.

For reservations and more information, visit www.louisvilleorchestra.org and click on "Education."

Resources

Good Neighbor Day

Sept. 24 is National Good Neighbor Day. Classroom materials for schools are available online.

www.natgoodneighborday.org

Reading/writing specialist courses available online

The reading and writing specialist program is the latest graduate-level course offering available online from the University of the Cumberlands in Whitley County. The courses can be applied toward a master's degree in education, a Rank I certification or for general content knowledge.

For more information, go to www.elearnportal.com/cc on the Web or e-mail elearn@ucumberlands.edu.

ParentInfo

Teachers and parents of school-age children can receive helpful information related to education and child development from the Kentucky Department of Education.

Twice a month, the department sends out a free electronic newsletter called "ParentInfo" that includes brief features on testing, school based decision making councils, school report cards, technology and more. It also includes links to helpful resources on the Web.

Teachers and parents can go to www.education.ky.gov to register to receive "ParentInfo." Enter "parentinfo" in the keyword/search box, and then click "Search" to access the subscription page for ParentInfo.

Commissioner's Comments

Resources abound to guide instruction this school year

By Gene Wilhoit

gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov

Welcome back to another school year! I'm beginning the 2006-2007 school year excited by what it holds for Kentucky public schools.

Many Kentucky Secondary Alliance and other high schools across the state will begin this school year using new strategies to excite today's students. Small learning communities, freshman academies, coursework with increased relevance to careers and individualized instruction are just a few changes awaiting high school students.

Our teachers will be working hard to improve literacy by providing help for struggling readers at all levels and more focused writing instruction. Thanks to the legislature, we will be able to initiate 100 new Read to Achieve programs.

There also are several exciting opportunities focused on improving mathematics. More schools will be given opportunities to join the 45 mathematics intervention programs begun last fall. With support from the Kentucky Center for Mathematics at Northern Kentucky University, you will get help to increase mathematics skills at all levels.

With the release of the 2006 No Child Left Behind data in August, schools will learn the progress they've made with different student populations in reading and mathematics. The results in those two content areas from tests taken last spring will better help schools target new strategies for closing achievement gaps.

In September, the Department of Education will release school accountability classifications for the third biennium of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). We have many schools poised to reach 100 (on a 140-point scale) or beyond after the spring 2006 state assessments, and I plan to fulfill my promise to visit each school that meets or exceeds proficiency for the first time.

I am looking forward to getting out into your schools to meet teachers and administrators and to talk with students about what they are learning. It's an even bigger thrill to celebrate with faculties, administration, staff, students and district officials when schools pass recognition points on their growth charts and meet or exceed the state goal of proficiency.

I expect to log a lot of miles this fall and meet many of you as you celebrate accomplishments in your schools that are a direct result of good instruction!

As a former classroom teacher and someone who has been involved with education reform in Kentucky for nearly a decade, I know that getting to proficiency is no easy task. It takes a lot of hard work — hours spent as individuals and working in school teams to align curriculum to Kentucky's Core Content and Program of Studies, revamping and creating units of study, participating in quality professional development opportunities, visiting other class-

rooms and increasing your own content learning.

You've had to be flexible and constantly watching for changes in state and national standards. You must keep up to date with best practices and find ways to relate what students need to know with how they will use that knowledge in the world they will enter.

Being a teacher is an awesome responsibility, not only to your students but to the future of Kentucky. What you teach your students this school year will impact Kentucky and its economy for years to come.

That's why it is important, if not imperative, that all teachers be aware that they are not alone in the journey to proficiency and beyond. The Kentucky Board of Education and department staff are working with you throughout that journey.

We have made major improvements in our assessment and accountability system, including revising core content and student performance standards, improving writing instruction and components of the writing assessments, finding better ways to assess arts/practical living and vocational studies, laying groundwork for a longitudinal component to state reading and mathematics assessments, reporting assessment data to schools earlier in the school year, adding a student accountability component in the state assessments, and developing end-of-course and diagnostic assessments for the middle and high school levels.

As each component of CATS has been established, the board and department have called upon Kentucky teachers to help make those components the best they can be for preparing students for college and careers. Those experts from the field — who work alongside many of you every day in your schools — have told department staff what teachers need to help them align curriculum and revamp and create units of study, what types of professional development opportunities teachers need and how teachers want to receive information.

We've worked hard to turn those recommendations into realities, using best practices and the latest technology to deliver the information. Two years ago, the department established a Web-based learning community called Teaching Tools.

The site is providing a place where teachers can find assistance in developing curriculum as well as share their proven standards-based resources to improve teaching and learning. Teachers at all levels can find sample curriculum maps, standards-based units of study, and Kentucky's redefined curriculum documents to help align curriculum vertically and horizontally, plan standards-based instruction and assessment, and communicate expectations for student learning.

The department's Web site also displays the newly revised Program of Studies and Core Content 4.1, and links to standards-based lessons that are Kentucky-aligned

via Kentucky Educational TV's KET EncycloMedia and MarcoPolo Kentucky. Teachers can find resources on our Web site about Universal Design for Learning, which uses technology to deliver instruction to students with diverse learning needs.

Teachers can find content-specific information by grade level on the department's Web site. With the federal accountability emphasis on reading and mathematics, the department is working closely with the Kentucky Center for Mathematics and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, a partnership among Kentucky's public universities, to help teachers strengthen their content knowledge and coaching skills to increase student learning in both content areas.

Resources also are available online to help teachers understand the changes in the state writing assessments including how to develop ideas and teaching analytical and technical writing. While writing cluster leaders are being trained to use the new scoring tool for writing assessments, teachers can access the rubric online to begin understanding how to use it.

In addition, there are incredible professional development opportunities available throughout the school year and every summer. These training sessions help teachers gain new insight and enthusiasm for their content teaching.

The reactions of participants at this past summer's three Aviation Institutes are typical of how educators are recharged by content-rich professional development. They couldn't wait to use the inquiry-based activities in their mathematics, science and social studies classes!

I encourage you to monitor the depart-

ment's professional development Web pages to find these types of opportunities in your content area. You won't be sorry you participated in any of the standards-based events.

Yes, I believe we are beginning a great year for Kentucky public schools. Kentucky educators have one of the most important jobs in the state. You have the tremendous responsibility of shaping young lives to become lifelong learners, to be contributors to this society and to engage successfully into the next phase of their lives whether it be college or careers.

(To respond to this topic, contact Commissioner Wilhoit by e-mail at gene.wilhoit@education.ky.gov.)

MORE INFO . . .

www.education.ky.gov

- Click "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner, select "Teaching Tools" from the list and click.
- Click "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner, select "Professional Development Opportunities" and click.
- Click "KDE QuickLinks" in the upper right-hand corner, select "Universal Design for Learning" and click.
- To access MarcoPolo in Kentucky, enter "MarcoPolo" in the keyword/search box in the upper right-hand corner and click.
- To access KET EncycloMedia, scroll down the left side of the homepage and click on the KET EncycloMedia logo.

www.kentuckymathematics.org
www.kentuckyliteracy.org

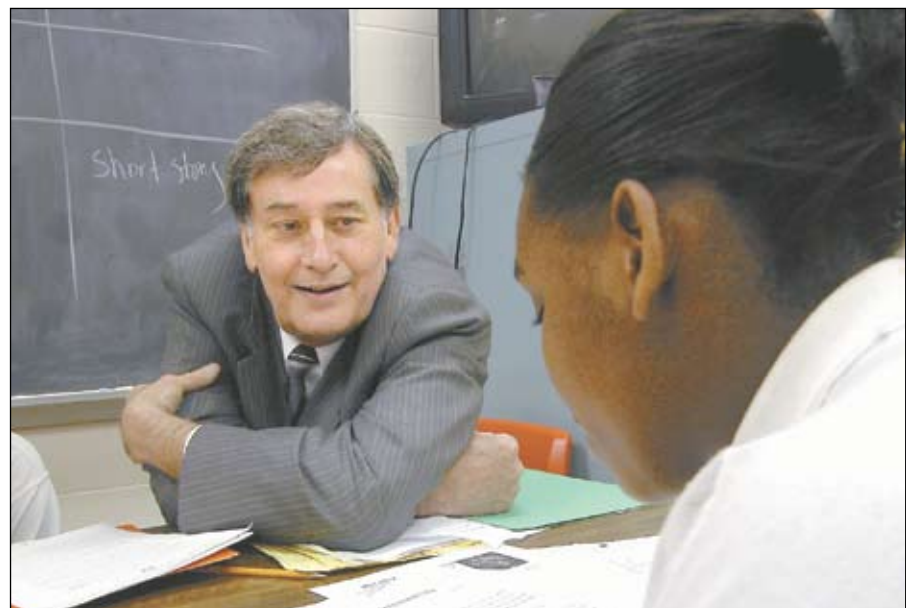


Photo by Rick McComb

Trading thoughts about writing

Commissioner of Education Gene Wilhoit leans into a conversation about writing with Mashaya Robinson during language arts class at Crosby Middle School. The commissioner visited the Jefferson County school as well as South Oldham Middle (Oldham County) and James T. Alton Middle (Hardin County) last spring after the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform named the schools Kentucky Schools to Watch. The program recognizes academic excellence, developmental responsiveness and social equity.

Students see the fruits of their learning and labor

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

When it comes to getting a well-rounded education, it doesn't hurt to get your hands dirty. At least that's what agricultural education students in Hardin County are learning. By taking the district's Greenhouse Technology course, students at the three high schools are realizing that working in a greenhouse is not just about raising plants.

"Students are surprised at the work that it takes and the different content areas that are integrated into this class," said Katy Doyle, agriculture teacher at Central Hardin High School. "They are getting chemistry, biology, plant science, mathematics, marketing and business skills."

The course explores the many areas of horticulture. Students learn about plant identification, growth, reproduction and propagation. They also study fertilization, climate control and soil samples.

"The greenhouse provides a great laboratory experience," Doyle said. "Students learn concepts in the classroom and then put them into practice in the greenhouse."

Each Hardin County high school has a greenhouse. According to the Kentucky Department of Education, there are nearly 120 student-run greenhouses in the state's public school system.

Hardin County students start plants from seeds. They spend time in the greenhouse throughout the school year watering and transplanting seedlings and plugs. They also are responsible for cutting and budding the plants as they grow.

In the fall, the students start working with ferns and poinsettias. Through the school year, they move to annuals, perennials and vegetable plants. By spring, the greenhouses are full of hanging baskets containing petunias and impatiens, as well as flats of marigolds, begonias, tomatoes, peppers and more.

Students grow and maintain the plants and vegetables to sell to the community. As a school-based enterprise, the greenhouses give students opportunities to learn marketing and business skills and customer relations, Doyle said. Money earned from the flower and plant sales is spent on supplies for the greenhouses and maintenance of the facilities.

At John Hardin High School, students can earn FFA (formerly Future Farmers of America) cred-

its if they work in the greenhouse during non-school hours. These credits can be used to help pay for FFA school trips.

Mason Crawford, agriscience teacher and FFA adviser at John Hardin, said his students have marketed to local businesses that buy their inventory in bulk.

"Through the efforts of the students, they have raised over 50 percent of the cost of the greenhouse," he said.

Crawford's students have learned to market and promote items in the greenhouse. They also perform experiments in the greenhouse, including tests in aquaponics.

"A greenhouse can provide great laboratory opportunities not only in horticulture, but also in other courses of the agricultural education program," said Curt Lucas, program consultant in the

Kentucky Department of Education. "Courses in forestry, natural resources, agriscience technology, tissue culture and biotechnology, for example, can benefit from the experiences a greenhouse has to offer."

Lucas said a complete agricultural education program should consist of three components. The first part is classroom plus laboratory instruction, like that offered in the greenhouse. The second is involvement in the student organization FFA. He said FFA is important to instill leadership development and personal growth skills in students.

The third and final component is for students to participate in a supervised agriculture experience. Students involved in internships, entrepreneurial projects, after-school jobs or research projects get hands-on experience beyond the

regular school day.

"The purpose of this program, like others in Career and Technical Education, is to arm students with practical skills and prepare them for college and careers," Lucas said.

Through a grant provided by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, the Department of Education is implementing a new curriculum for agricultural education. The curriculum is now CD-based and Web-based and is aligned to Kentucky's Core Content, as well as Kentucky's Occupational Skill Standards. Teachers can contact Lucas to review online assessments, writing exercises and other online tools available for instruction.

According to Lucas, students in agricultural education programs now have more opportunities to earn college credit while in high

school. In a comprehensive statewide agreement with the state universities' agriculture programs, students who complete the major career courses with at least a B and pass Kentucky's Occupational Skills Standards assessment can earn three hours of college credit per career major, up to a maximum of six hours.

"It is our goal to prepare students for the future," Lucas said, "whether that means furthering their education in college or going directly into a career. Students in the agricultural education program have the benefit of hands-on, practical experience that will serve them in their future."

MORE INFO . . .

Curt Lucas, (502) 564-3472, curt.lucas@education.ky.gov

Matt Chaliff, FFA consultant, (502) 564-3472, matt.chaliff@education.ky.gov



John Hardin High School student Amber Krauser crushes wheat germ so that she can extract DNA for a gene mapping experiment.



Danisha Claggett and Lee Goodman take care of baskets of ferns as part of their greenhouse training at Central Hardin High School.

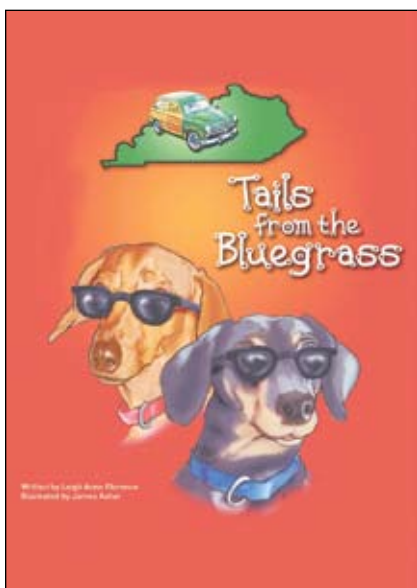
Photos by Rick McComb

'Tails from the Bluegrass II' encourages students to read and explore Kentucky

A new installment of the award-winning "Tails from the Bluegrass," published as a serial story last fall in more than 84 Kentucky newspapers, will continue the journey of Woody the wiener dog and his sister Chloe across the Bluegrass State beginning the week of Sept. 11. In "Tails from the Bluegrass II," Woody helps young readers learn more about Kentucky history and geography.

"Tails from the Bluegrass II" is written by Kentucky author Leigh Anne Florence, Woody's owner. In this second 10-week serial story, Woody, Chloe and their family reach Kentucky destinations, such as Owensboro, Madisonville, Hopkinsville, Berea and Danville, by different modes of transportation — the Belle of Louisville, a fishing boat, the sidecar of a motorcycle and a Bookmobile. On their journey, they discover interesting facts about the state, as well as learn life lessons, improve Woody's manners and even develop an exercise program.

Elementary school teachers can contact their local newspapers to find out how to get free copies of the chapter story for use in their classrooms. LG&E/Kentucky Util-



The cover of Woody's first chapter book, "Tails from the Bluegrass" features drawings of the traveling wiener dogs.

ities, both e.on companies, and the Kentucky Press Association's Kentucky Network for Newspapers in Education program, sponsors of the serial story, offer educators specially designed scrapbooks in which to collect each chapter.

The Kentucky Press Association also makes available free, online learning activities for each chapter at the Web address listed below. A professional development work-

shop will be held Sept. 7 at 4:30 p.m. in Madisonville to show teachers how to integrate the entire newspaper into their curriculum. Interested teachers can contact Kriss Johnson, chair of the Kentucky Network for Newspapers in Education, by e-mail for reservations or more information.

"Tails from the Bluegrass" and the Kentucky Press Association received the second-place award for Best Statewide Literacy Project in the 2005-2006 Southern Newspaper Publisher's Literacy Contest.

For more information about "Tails from the Bluegrass II," teachers can contact their local newspaper publishers or e-mail Johnson, chair of the state Newspapers in Education program, at the address listed below. To learn more about Woody the Kentucky wiener dog or to order the paperback version of "Tails from the Bluegrass," visit his Web site listed below.

MORE INFO ...

kjohnson@kypress.com
www.kypress.com
www.thewoodybooks.com

Submitted by Lexington Herald-Leader

Traveling exhibit educates students about drug abuse

"I'm not ever going to use drugs," said Evan Wright, a seventh-grade student at Second Street School (Frankfort Independent), as he emerged from the Kentucky State Police's newly created Substance Abuse Information Center. The mobile exhibit, available free of charge to middle and high schools and community events, is designed to help educate the public about the devastating effects of drug use and abuse.

The 40-foot trailer exhibits feature a mock methamphetamine lab and containers of growing marijuana. Visitors also see a video presentation of before-and-after images of actual methamphetamine users and video drug prevention messages. Exhibits also draw attention to club and prescription drug abuse.

A Kentucky State Police employee travels with the exhibit to answer questions. A teachers'



A student at Second Street School (Frankfort Independent) looked at part of the live exhibit in the Kentucky State Police's new traveling Substance Abuse Information Center.

guide will be mailed to schools that book the exhibit to assist teachers in preparing lesson plans in conjunction with what students will see and learn in the display. The guide also will provide links to teaching resources on the Internet.

Teresa Barton, director of Kentucky's Office of Drug Control Policy, said the mobile exhibit should help initiate conversations about drugs between young people and adults. "Many adults are uncomfortable talking to chil-

dren about drugs and other harmful behaviors," said Barton. "As the images in these exhibits show, drug abuse is present here in Kentucky and cannot be ignored."

The innovative exhibit addresses addiction, detection, recognition, treatment and prevention. The images show the realities of drug abuse. Frank-

fort middle school students who attended the opening of the exhibit found the dramatic visuals both interesting and "scary." The before-and-after photographs of young drug users "really got (my) attention," said seventh grader Rachel Crowe.

MORE INFO ...

To schedule the Substance Abuse Information Center for a school or community event, call (502) 695-6344.

Photo submitted by the Kentucky State Police

'No Child Left Offline' receives national award

ConnectKentucky's No Child Left Offline initiative received the 2006 Southern Growth Policies Board Innovator Award this summer. The award honors innovative Southern initiatives that are improving the quality of life in the region.

ConnectKentucky, a nonprofit organization that promotes technology-based economic development in the commonwealth is coordinating the No Child Left Offline project for Kentucky. The initiative brings together public and private partners to bridge the gap for the 215,000 children in Kentucky who do not own a home computer.

The initiative is the most comprehensive of its kind undertaken by any state in the nation. The program is saving thousands of usable computers from landfills by refurbishing them for use by Kentucky families that have no computer in their homes.

Gov. Ernie Fletcher began the program last January as part of Kentucky's Prescription for Innovation, a comprehensive plan to accelerate technology growth, particularly in the areas of broadband deployment and technology literacy and usage.

No Child Left Offline distributes refurbished surplus government computers to the homes of eighth graders who otherwise would not have a computer at home. ConnectKentucky works directly with local school districts on a county-by-county basis to distribute the computers to students.

For each computer refurbished, Microsoft is providing its latest operating system and a variety of application software, while CA Inc. provides a software security suite. Additionally, Lexmark International is providing a new ink jet printer for every computer.

No Child Left Offline has delivered nearly 1,000 refurbished computers and new printers to the homes of selected eighth-grade students in the Appalachian region of the state. By the end of 2006, it is expected 2,000 computers will be delivered.

MORE INFO ...

<http://connectkentucky.org>

Changed your address?

Kentucky Teacher receives mailing addresses for all active Kentucky certified classroom teachers and administrators from the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System. If you are employed by a Kentucky public school, you can change your address or mailing information in one of two ways:

- Complete a change of address form that can be downloaded from the retirement system's Web site at <http://ktrs.ky.gov/ktrsresources/MEInfo/chgaddrnew.htm>.
- Submit a written request that includes your old address, new address, your Social Security number and your signature.

Mail the form or your written request to:
Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System
ATTN: Tammy Brown
479 Versailles Rd.
Frankfort, KY 40601

If you are not a current teacher or administrator, e-mail your change of address to kyteacher@education.ky.gov or send your change of address information in writing to:
Kentucky Teacher
612 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601

Haynes reaches students through art across all core content areas

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Fourth Street Elementary School art teacher Judi Haynes has made a career out of two things she loves — teaching and art.

Her contribution to her students in Newport Independent Schools and her widespread involvement in the art education field were reasons for her receiving the Kentucky Art Association's top honor for elementary art educators. The association named Haynes the 2006 Kentucky Art Educator of the Year.

"Elementary art is beneficial to students of all ages and backgrounds. Not only can students identify with an intelligence that is not linguistic or mathematical, but it serves as a voice for most students to express feelings and emotions that surface consciously and unconsciously," said Haynes.

"Basic daily living requires us to make many aesthetic choices. For example, we choose our wardrobe not only by color, but also by texture and design. Art education can heighten the senses to more possibilities and combinations," continued Haynes.

Artistic exploration and expression enhance and develop intellectual, social and physical skills. Haynes' students express themselves through words, pictures, music, photography and other art forms.

Haynes works with most of the Fourth Street students twice a week. All of her lessons are aligned to Kentucky's Core Content but she includes additional art history, art criticism and aesthetics to round out their art education. "Not all of the students I meet will become a Rembrandt or a Mary Cassatt, but I try to reach them through writing, researching and speaking," said Haynes.

She collaborates with the other special-area teachers to give students a more holistic education. This seems to help students understand the similarities in the arts, she said. Integrating the arts gives students more depth and realism in the learning that takes place. "I am a firm believer in integrating all subject matter with art," said Haynes.

Using art in the classroom has helped Haynes meet the needs of many diverse learners by addressing her students' learning styles and multiple intelligences. Because of these efforts, the school's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) academic indices are progressing. For example, Fourth Street's arts and humanities index has risen from 22 in 2000 to 49 in 2005.

Principal Jim Clinkenbeard said, "Ms. Haynes' expertise shows in how the students at our school enjoy participating in art classes."



Judi Haynes looks over the shoulder of Ben McCutchen as he creates a piece of crayon art at Fourth Street Elementary.

Haynes incorporates dance, drama, music, visual art, historical and cultural perspective in both a discipline-based and an integrated program that focuses on different grade-level standards each year. She also connects art to what students are learning in other class-

rooms.

Research indicates that children respond to learning through the arts and tend to retain more in the process. Studying the arts can improve a student's overall academic achievement by improving communication

and critical-thinking skills. Some students who struggle academically and those who cannot express themselves verbally often can find success in arts activities, said Haynes.

In the classroom, Haynes uses resource binders that focus on an art form, artist, art period or geographical area. The 82 binders are filled with images and student-level biographical and contextual information. Haynes refers to them as her "teaching binders." She uses them to introduce units and to reinforce historical art research.

Throughout her career, Haynes has been a resource not only to students, but teachers as well. Haynes has conducted sessions at many state and national arts conventions and taught graduate-level classes at the University of Cincinnati, the Art Academy of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky University.

Haynes said she enjoys having the opportunity to teach art at different levels.

"I get the best of both worlds," she said. "I get to teach the little people...and their teachers"

Although Haynes didn't get really involved with art until high school, she did grow up watching her father work as an artist and engineer.

"I guess I came by it naturally," she said. "I love teaching art to elementary school students. I get to expose them to things I didn't learn about until college, which is wonderful."

Haynes considers herself a lifelong student as well as educator. She received her undergraduate degree from Miami University and her master's and doctorate in art education at the University of Cincinnati.

She said she also learns from her students and her travels, which allow her to also teach "culture through art."

Last school year, Haynes participated in a three-week trip to Japan as part of the Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program to learn about Japanese culture and education. "It was amazing and wonderful," she said, "truly a unique, once-in-a-lifetime experience." She has been sharing the experience with her elementary school art class, as well as giving presentations for the art world and local community.

"The trip was an awesome experience. I was completely immersed in their culture and arts. My students have created Uchiwas (Japanese fans) and hanging scroll paintings," she said.

Haynes said her students are her biggest reward. "I've spent a big part of my life in school and teaching art at all different levels," she said. "It's my life."

MORE INFO...

Judi Haynes, (859) 292-3021, judi.haynes@newport.kyschools.us

Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

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Write: Kentucky Teacher
612 Capital Plaza Tower
500 Mero St.
Frankfort, KY 40601



School psychologists provide lifelines for students

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

On the television show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," contestants are given three lifelines to use if they need a little extra guidance in making the right choices to answer the questions. Kentucky public school students also have people to call on when they could use a lifeline or a little extra assistance.

School psychologists offer a lifeline to students who need guidance. They use their expertise to make sure a student's support system is functioning well and channeled into constructive action.

As one of nine school psychologists in Bullitt County Schools, Misty Lay's focus is on helping students diagnosed with disabilities or identified with special talents learn and experience academic success. The task is not always easy.

Lay says a good workday for her occurs when a special needs student breaks through a cognitive barrier and understands a lesson. "That's what I work toward," she said. "It's the best feeling in the world when a student takes ownership of the concept being taught."

Lay works with approximately 10 students a week from Mt. Wash-

ington, Roby and Shepherdsville elementary schools. Roughly 80 percent of her time is spent with students, individually and in groups. She spends the remaining 20 percent of her time consulting with teachers and meeting with parents.

She helps inform parents that their children require special needs services. "That's one of the hardest things to say and one of the most difficult things for a parent to hear is that their child is not perfect," she said.

Conversely, there are moments when parents are relieved that their child will receive an education tailor-made to their special needs. "I am seeing more and more families that welcome these services for their child," she added.

She helps parents find answers to questions they will have about their special needs children. "If I don't have an answer, I will find it. Each child deserves a chance. If that is my child, then that child deserves my best work," she said.

From the initial evaluation of a student — she performs roughly 100 evaluations each school year — to continuing assessment, she works with classroom teachers to ensure that student needs are being met.

Her personal code of ethics is to

give 100 percent to everything she does when it comes to the mind and heart of a child. "I want to reach inside, pick a child up and either directly or indirectly provide them with a positive experience with school and life," she said.

Lay overcomes the mountainous paperwork and due process that accompanies her vocation by interacting with students. "I like to play games and sports with them and do fun things. I also just like to hang out and talk. Children have such interesting souls," she said.

Lay helps students succeed on three levels — academically, socially and emotionally. She collaborates with educators, parents and other professionals to create safe, healthy and supportive learning environments for all students. This helps strengthen connections between home and school, she said.

School psychologists are highly trained in both the psychology and education fields. They work to find the best solution for each student and situation and use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and district-wide support programs.

Lay also develops programs to train teachers and parents regarding effective teaching and learning

strategies and effective techniques to manage behavior at home and in the classroom.

Lay developed a school-based mentoring program, called "Friend Factor," which targets K-8 students with early adjustment difficulties. The purpose of Friend Factor is to increase school attendance, improve the student's social skills, increase self-esteem and enhance positive feelings toward school.

At-risk factors are measured by a schoolwide mental health screening and from other school records. Students who meet the at-risk criteria are eligible to participate. Each student is matched to a mentor who meets with him or her during school, 30 to 45 minutes weekly for 14 weeks.

Lay also designed and maintains the special education Web page for Bullitt County Schools to communicate with teachers, parents and the community. From the Web page, one may access all special education forms and information on policies, procedures and parent rights. The Web page also contains profiles of each school psychologist and what each does. There are parent pages, preschool information, current events and links to other sites. Each month the Web page highlights a special educator, a special education class-

room and a disability.

For Lay's tireless efforts, the Kentucky Association of Psychology in the Schools (KAPS) named her 2005 Kentucky School Psychologist of the Year. Lay avoids attention and only desires to go above and beyond what her heart wants to do for students. "Awards are humbling but I want them to reflect my advocacy for students," she said.

School psychology is not where Lay thought she'd be today. A mathematics and science major in college, Lay initially considered a career in medicine. A few years into college, she had a fateful meeting with a counselor who paired her interests with another career choice. "The counselor asked if I ever thought about being a school psychologist," Lay said. More than a decade later, she knows the decision was meant to be.

"This is definitely my niche," she said. "I have really enjoyed my eight years as a school psychologist in Bullitt County."

Lay believes that she is first and foremost a resource for students and teachers. She helps teachers problem-solve solutions for their students and their classroom. She also works very closely with school and district administrators.

Bullitt County's nine school psychologists cover the 23-school district, and each works in designated schools. Lay has worked at all grade levels but currently works in the elementary schools.

In Kentucky, the number of school psychologists is gradually increasing. However, it is still a unique position for most school districts.

"School social workers seem to be more community and family-based, whereas school psychologists are school- and child-centered. Social workers focus on all students, while a school psychologist works very closely with special education," said Lay. "School counselors and school psychologists' roles can sometimes overlap, especially in the areas of counseling, safe schools and school climate. School counselors also spend a large portion of their time managing statewide assessments, scheduling and vocational/postsecondary training."

MORE INFO...

Misty Lay, (502) 543-2271,
misty.lay@bullitt.kyschools.us
www.bullittschools.org/
depts/specialed



Photo by Rick McComb

Misty Lay, a Bullitt County school psychologist, conducts Kaufman's Assessment Battery for Children with student Dakota Engle. The Kentucky Association of Psychology in the Schools recognized Lay for her work in 2005.

Technology makes personalized curriculum accessible to all students

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

In today's ever-changing population, educators are challenged to meet the individual needs of more diverse students in every classroom. To address this issue, Kentucky public schools are moving away from a "one size fits all" approach to teaching and learning.

In an effort to respond to individual differences, schools like Strode Station Elementary in Clark County have begun to use a variety of technologies to ensure the general curriculum is fully accessible to all students. The school's use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) program is integrating computers and technology into the classroom to differentiate instruction in ways that more fully engage each learner.

"The program's goal is to develop a working model to implement UDL concepts across all classes in order to increase student access to the general curriculum and to improve the performance of all students in general and special education," said first-grade and technology resource teacher Amy Shoemaker.

According to Shoemaker, UDL can help students at different academic levels. A single classroom may include students who struggle to learn for any number of reasons — learning disabilities, English language barriers, behavioral problems, physical disabilities or a lack of interest. "A universally designed curriculum meets the widest ability levels of students, not just the gifted or disabled, but all students," she said.

UDL is a framework for a different insight on learning and new applications of technology. It provides digital versions of general curriculum content materials that can be accessed by students independently.

Strode Station's program

Strode Station received a three-year UDL grant funded through the Kentucky State Improvement Grant. Overseen by the University of Louisville, the competitive grant was awarded to three Kentucky schools. Strode Station was chosen as the elementary school model for the state. Leslie County Middle School and Mercer County High School also received the grant.

To begin its program, Strode Station created a UDL Integration Team. This team consisted of regular classroom and special educators with diverse teaching backgrounds and experience, district technology and collaborative leaders, a parent, a student and key administrators.

The team set up an eight-week pilot study to examine the use of the UDL technology platforms, IntelliTools Classroom Suite and IntelliKeys. Participating teachers at Strode Station were trained to use the new technology tool. They agreed to spend one hour a week incorporating the tool into the curriculum, and they received weekly follow-up lesson plans. They gathered writing samples from students at the beginning, middle and end of the pilot to evaluate progress.

By the end of the eight weeks, participating teachers reported improved writing

skills and increased student engagement. Student work demonstrated that students had a better understanding of sentence components, were more likely to write in complete complex sentences, were better at story sentencing and were better able to visualize a story.

Shoemaker said she saw reluctant student writers blossom into eager students. She saw one student who would not even attempt to write a sentence by himself become excited about sharing his work with the rest of the class after using the UDL program for a few weeks.

"The technology makes the kids feel successful," she said. According to Shoemaker, other benefits of the program include:

- immediate results
- team-building across and within grade levels
- increased technology skills among students and teachers
- a more positive attitude toward technology from staff
- increased student involvement in learning

The program also is helping nurture student leadership, Shoemaker said. Students involved in the Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) helped install software and provided technical support to the faculty. Shoemaker said project leaders hope to involve these students in designing and customizing future lessons based on requests from the teachers.

By using integrated units of study, multi-sensory teaching, technology, differentiated instruction and performance-based assessments, the UDL tools at Strode Station offer students multiple means of presenting the

material, multiple means of interacting with the material and multiple means of demonstrating what they know.

The school's third-year grant plan is to disseminate results of the schoolwide implementation plan at the district level and then through state and national presentations.

Spreading across the state

The Kentucky Department of Education has implemented a statewide UDL initiative intended to increase student access to the general curriculum. Three strands of this initiative include:

- making computerized reading supports available to every student who requires technology to access print material
- providing students using text readers as a reading accommodation the opportunity to use this technology to take the state assessment
- facilitating the ability and delivery of the general curriculum in an accessible digital format

Teachers can create and display visually appealing instructional materials in class using Microsoft PowerPoint, a computer and LCD projector or even hands-on manipulatives.

New accessible curriculum materials offered by textbook publishers can be purchased to complement those created by teachers for individual lesson activities. These materials include support features such as text reading software, hyperlinks to key concepts, on-demand dictionaries, digital images of key material, video clips, concept maps, audio files of speeches or lectures, online assessments, along with teacher-created Web sites.

Students can customize these supports,

allowing them to tailor the content to their own preferences and ability levels using built-in controls within the digital curriculum or through accompanying software.

There also are online tools that align with UDL principles. For example, KET's EncycloMedia allows teachers and students to access the power of streaming video in classrooms.

"Accessible digital curriculum materials with built-in supports help to personalize learning," said Toyah Robey, program manager in the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Exceptional Children's Services. "This begins when the student is able to do, hear and learn things they wouldn't have previously been able to do in the traditional classroom."

When given access to basic technology and universally designed accessible digital curriculum materials, students can control their own learning. Using supports built into the digital curriculum itself or software tools, students have more resources to solve problems, gain reading assistance or just change the look and feel of the curriculum to suit their own tastes, Robey explained.

"The power of future curriculum will be in the alternative formats, concepts, activities and links of the learning network, all afforded by universal design," Robey said. "Universal design will pave the way for educational materials with sufficient breadth, depth and flexibility to reach all learners and learning contexts effectively."

MORE INFO . . .

Toyah Robey, (502) 564-4970,
toyah.robey@education.ky.gov

Amy Shoemaker, (859) 745-3915, amy.
shoemaker@clark.kyschools.us



Strode Station Elementary students DeMikale Knowles, left, Whitney McNeal and Michael Hale discuss how to solve a problem that appears on a laptop computer in their classroom.

Photo by Rick McComb



Photo by Rick McComb

Getting back to nature

Jeffersontown Elementary students who speak English as a second language got the opportunity last spring to learn more about Kentucky native plants and animals during a trip to Blackacre State Nature Preserve in Jefferson County. Brayan Juarez examines a grasshopper that he and Memfree Gonzalez, right, captured during an investigation of animals and insects around the outdoor classroom.

REVISED from page 1

dents who graduate from Kentucky high schools. The document also contains the content standards for primary, intermediate and middle-level programs that lead to the high school graduation requirements. This ensures that students across the state receive common content in each grade and have opportunities to learn at a high level.

State law requires the Program of Studies for public schools. The revised document is posted on the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site as a draft document until it completes the regulatory process necessary to incorporate the revisions into law.

Teachers will notice that the Program of Studies is organized in a new way. Each level – primary, intermediate, middle and high school – includes inquiry and research standards to integrate across content areas and to guide learning. Also, each content area is arranged by “Big Ideas.” Each “Big Idea” provides an organizer for the content standards. Academic Expectations are listed for each Big Idea, as is a list of what students should learn (enduring knowledge and understandings) and be able to

do (skills and concepts). This new organizational structure provides a framework for curriculum mapping and course, unit and lesson planning.

Core Content for Assessment

Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment is a companion piece to the Program of Studies and “Kentucky's Academic Expectations.” The core content document identifies the content that is essential for all students to know at every grade level. It also provides guidance to teachers as to what content will be included in the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) administered each spring.

Teachers involved in the review last school year of Core Content Version 4.0 offered suggestions for changes in several areas of the revised document. While their recommendations were not extensive, they were important enough to change the version number on the revised document to 4.1.

Version 4.1 will be considered officially final sometime in August. Until then, teachers can see the draft changes on the Department of Education's Web site.

NEW from page 1

Program of Studies. The board stated that the education of students about these concepts will continue to be a matter of discretion at the local level.

The regulation governing the Program of Studies will now proceed through the regulatory review process to the appropriate legislative committees.

With the rapid growth of alternative education programs, both the Kentucky Department of Education and the state board have realized the need for increased attention regarding the oversight of these programs. At its June meeting, the board heard a report from the Center for School Safety on the monitoring of 40 randomly chosen alternative education programs. The department contracted with the Center for School Safety to provide the monitoring services.

Jon Akers, executive director of the Center for School Safety, and department alternative education consultants shared with the board that the curriculum in most programs is not fully aligned with Kentucky's standards and/or local standards. They said the resulting curriculum lacks rigor and challenge.

The group also shared with the board that, according to the report, not all behavioral programs are providing individual and group counseling services to address behavioral issues, even though many students are placed in the programs for disciplinary reasons.

The monitoring study also found that in most programs, leadership does not analyze Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) data at the program level to determine student needs, or to set goals and objectives for improvement.

After hearing the report, the board asked Commissioner Gene Wilhoit to send a letter to all superintendents asking for the immediate

correction of any violations of law occurring in alternative education programs. The board also asked that department staff and staff from the Center for School Safety collaborate to make recommendations for improving these programs. The board is scheduled to hear a report on these efforts at its December meeting.

The board heard several presentations that provided information for future decisions on the state's assessment and accountability system, including a history of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) and its relationship to the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

Board members also examined information about the department's intervention efforts in low-performing schools and districts. The board heard a status report on new federal regulations in preparation of future decisions related to state special education requirements. Finally, members reviewed the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS), including information about additional funding provided by the 2006 General Assembly.

In other business, the board appointed Lea Wise Prewitt to fill an at-large position on the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) Board of Control. By law, the Kentucky Board of Education appoints four at-large members to the KHSAA Board of Control to a four-year term. Prewitt's term began on July 1.

The next regular meeting of the board will be August 2 and 3 in Frankfort.

MORE INFO...

www.education.ky.gov

- Click on “KDE Quicklinks” in the upper right-hand corner. Scroll down to “State Board of Education” and click.

To help teachers identify the differences between the recent versions, teachers and department staff have developed Cross-Walk documents. The CrossWalks help teachers better understand the changes the latest revisions will have on their instruction beginning this school year. The spring 2007 KCCT assessments will contain items from the revised core content.

Like the Program of Studies, Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment is now organized by grade level from end of primary through high school. This allows teachers in each grade — not just assessment years — to know what content students need to learn and know.

The physical appearance of the core content document and types of punctuation used are keys to help teachers. Different type styles are used within the document to indicate whether content will be tested on state assessments or in the classroom. Punctuation, like parentheses, alert teachers to information that may or may not be assessed on the KCCT.

In addition, the revised core content clarifies how students will be expected

to demonstrate their knowledge on state assessments. After each content statement, educators will find a depth of knowledge (DOK) level, from 1 to 4, assigned to the statement.

The DOK are descriptive — not a taxonomy — to illustrate how deeply a student has to know content in order to respond to a testing item. The levels range from recalling specific facts (Level 1) to strategic reasoning and planning (Level 3). The best example of Level 4 DOK, which requires complex and extended reasoning, is Kentucky's writing portfolio where students complete their work over time.

Selected released items from previous KCCT have been posted on the department's Web site with annotations to indicate what level of DOK the items address. Items can be found for every content area and every assessed grade.

MORE INFO...

www.education.ky.gov

- “KDE Quicklinks” contains links to the Core Content for Assessment and Program of Studies.

EDUCATION

from page 1

Organizing your curriculum and setting classroom goals are imperative. To meet the terms of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, teachers must expect more to have students achieve more.

"Expect More, Achieve More" is a motto at many schools across the United States. Children will strive to be their best when they know teachers are striving to do their best.

Everything you do should improve student achievement. If it doesn't, then don't do it! Be sure your curriculum is aligned with your objectives, and participate in regular across-grade-level team meetings. Share student work with your peers, and have them critique your lesson plans and classroom activities on a regular basis.

As a beginning teacher, you will need a mentor. Don't expect to have all the answers. Remember that it is all right to ask others for help. If you have a problem, refer it to the team leaders, content specialist or principal.

During this first year, I recommend that you talk to your principal often. Don't be afraid to talk about student, parent or peer concerns. Feel free to ask for assistance. Invite the principal into your room to see

the multiple strategies you and your students use.

Keep good documentation of everything. A good rule to follow: "If it is not written down, it didn't happen." Document all parent calls, conferences, faculty meetings, special education meetings, committee meetings and evaluation summary meetings.

Honesty is not the best policy; it is the ONLY policy. Be honest in your words and deeds. It can be difficult to tell a parent that a child is falling behind academically. It may not be easy to talk with a parent about special education issues. But as a teacher, it is your responsibility to talk frankly about the facts.

Be honest in your dealings with your peers. If you make a mistake, own up to it, apologize and move on.

Tell your principal if you say something you should not have said, if you do something that might be controversial or if you are involved in anything that might catch him or her off guard. No one enjoys getting a call at night or on the weekends from an irate parent or community member.

Timing is vital. Don't wait until May to tell a parent his or her child is not adequately

making progress to move to the next level. Develop a strong partnership with parents at the first of the school year and talk with them throughout the year about progress or lack thereof. Call parents about both positive and negative behaviors so that trust is built early. You will be more credible if you let the parents know that you need them.

Be positive when you speak to everyone — especially your students. They deserve your respect, and you must earn theirs. Be positive when working with parents, and don't forget to thank them for their help. Be a positive role model in your community. Join organizations that work with children and use your expertise in the leadership of the organization.

Keep accurate records for your bookkeeper. Know the procurement laws, and talk to your bookkeeper about how to properly deal with money. A clear understanding of school financial record keeping will keep you out of trouble!

Make time to read and study the teaching profession. Articles in journals, newspapers, e-zines and e-journals are excellent ways to get the most up-to-date information about teaching and learning. Subscribe to daily e-mails that alert you to the latest in

teaching and technology. Staying informed can only make you a viable current events source for your students. Model reading with your students to show that reading is vital.

Confidentiality is very important in the teaching field. With all special needs children, teachers must honor and protect anonymity. Be careful how you describe certain children — don't use acronyms to describe labels that readily identify a child. Be cognizant that what you say will be repeated and that it is in your best interest to remain quiet.

New teachers will always hold a special place in my heart. Be proud of your chosen field. Speak only optimistically about your profession and by all means, remember, "You applied for this job." It didn't come from Heaven...or maybe it did!

(Mary Lou Yeatts teaches graduate students in Educational Studies, Leadership and Counseling at Murray State University. As a former teacher and principal, she has worked with student teachers throughout her education career. Contact her for more information at (270) 809-2794 or by e-mail at marylou.yeatts@coe.murraystate.edu.)

Department uses variety of ways to get its message to educators

Getting the Department of Education's message to Kentucky educators is part of the mission of the Office of Communications. Through a monthly publication, *Kentucky Teacher*, and a monthly television show, *Inside Kentucky Schools*, the communications staff features teachers and their strategies for moving students to proficiency and beyond.

Both are long-established communications tools. However, the 2006-2007 school year finds changes in both the paper and the TV show.

Over the summer, graphic artist John Boone has led the *Kentucky Teacher* staff in making design changes that will help the publication be more eye-catching and reader friendly.

The biggest change is on the front page. We've moved the mailing label from Page 12 to Page 1. That allows us to fold the paper with the front page on the outside, making it less awkward to open and begin reading.

The nameplate at the top of Page 1 also received a slight redesign. Instead of using cutout photos in the upper right-hand corner to direct readers to stories within the paper, we will feature Kentucky teachers in these photos. Photographer Rick McComb will be taking photos of teachers for that spot at random locations throughout the state during this school year.

In response to readers' suggestions, we've also changed the way we provide contact information and Web addresses. On Pages 2 and 11, we're putting all Web addresses in boldface type to make them easier to read. On other pages, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and Web addresses for more information will be found in colorful boxes at the end of each news and feature story.

We've also made changes in the font styles for our stories and headlines to make them easier to read. For those of you really into type styles, we're using 9-point Palatino for text and various sizes of Swiss 721 Cn BT for most headlines. We're hoping these changes make the articles easier to follow and the information more usable.

Kentucky Teacher is mailed to educators throughout the state each month during the school year. Each year's issues since 1997 are available on the department's Web site.

Inside Kentucky Schools

For 20 years, *Inside Kentucky Schools* has

been broadcast to viewers on Kentucky Educational Television (KET) and cable stations throughout Kentucky. Beginning this fall, viewers can access this award-winning program at their convenience on the department's Web site. Some archived programs from last school year also will be available for viewing.

In addition to watching the program on the computer, teachers and parents still can catch *Inside Kentucky Schools* on KET. Check KET and local cable stations for viewing times in your area.

We look forward to hearing your com-

ments on the changes to *Kentucky Teacher* and *Inside Kentucky Schools*.

MORE INFO . . .

kyteacher@education.ky.gov
www.education.ky.gov

- Click on "KDE QuickLinks," scroll down the list to "Kentucky Teacher" and click.
- Enter "IKS" in the keyword/search box in the upper right-hand corner and click.



Photo by Rick McComb

Listening and learning

Robert Hartwell, standing in back, talks to students at Worthington Elementary (Raceland-Worthington Independent) about life on the submarine USS Kentucky, while fellow sailors Adam Kinsinger and Nathan Crawford make repairs to the school's gazebo. More than 20 sailors from the submarine spent part of their shore leave last spring at the school and visiting in the community as part of a long-standing partnership. Over 27 years, sailors from the submarine have helped on such school projects as wiring the building for the Internet, building a greenhouse and planting tables, a picnic shelter and picnic tables, setting and calibrating a sundial, and refurbishing the playground.

Leadership Letter



Photo submitted by Creative Services Division

Estill County Circuit Judge William Trude Jr., left, administers the oath of office to new and reappointed Kentucky Board of Education members John Douglas Hubbard, Kay Baird, Keith Travis, Wilburn "Joe" Brothers, Judith H. Gibbons, the Rev. C.B. Akins Sr. and Jeanne H. Ferguson during their first gathering as a board last May at Natural Bridge State Resort Park.

Gibbons appointed to Kentucky Board of Education

Gov. Ernie Fletcher has appointed Judith H. Gibbons to the Kentucky Board of Education. She joins the Rev. C.B. Akins Sr. of Fayette County, Kay Baird of Pikeville, Wilburn "Joe" Brothers of Elizabethtown, Jeanne H. Ferguson of Louisville and John Douglas Hubbard of Bardstown, all of whom had been previously appointed. Their terms will expire in 2010.

Gibbons of Lakeside Park (Kenton County) is a retired vice president of a professional career management firm. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and has a long history of involvement in education initiatives.

For the last 12 years, her focus has been on implementing stronger collaboration between the business and education communities. She serves on the Northern Kentucky University Foundation, Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Education Alliance, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, American Cancer Society and Vision 2015. She is a graduate of Leadership Northern Kentucky.

Compiled by Joy Barr
joy.barr@education.ky.gov

21 school districts meet families' needs

Twenty-one Kentucky school districts are among the 2,500 public school districts in the U.S. to receive the 2006 What Parents Want Award from SchoolMatch, an independent, nationwide service that helps relocating families find schools that meet the needs of their children.

According to SchoolMatch, parents most often look for school systems that are: competitive in academic test scores, academically solid, accredited, recognized for excellence, competitive in teacher salaries, above average in expenditures for instructional resources and library/media services, and known for small class sizes.

The recognized Kentucky districts are Beechwood Independent, Boone County, Daviess County, Elizabethtown Independent, Erlanger-Elsmere Independent, Fayette County, Fort Thomas Independent, Frankfort Independent, Franklin County, Hardin County, Jefferson County, Jessamine County, Kenton County, Madison County, McCracken County, Murray Independent, Pikeville Independent, Oldham

County, Russell County, Warren County and Woodford County.

Kentucky wins innovation award

Kentucky has received the 2006 Frank Newman Award for State Innovation. The award is given each year by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) to recognize excellence in state education policy and policymaking.

www.ecs.org

State graduation rate increases slightly

This summer, the Kentucky Department of Education released the 2004-2005 nonacademic data for public schools. This report reflects data from attendance, retention, dropout, graduation and successful transition to adult life, which comprise the nonacademic component of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). Because of the nature of the data, nonacademic results lag behind CATS test results by one year.

The data show that Kentucky's high school graduation rate increased by more than a point since the 2003-2004 school year — from 81.29 percent to 82.84 percent.

The high school dropout rate was virtually unchanged, moving from 3.35 percent

in 2004 to 3.49 percent in 2005. In grades 9-12, 359 more students dropped out in 2005 than in 2004. The highest dropout rate — 4.11 percent — occurred in the 12th grade.

The retention rate — the percentage of students in grades 4-12 who are held back a grade — increased slightly. School attendance rates and the percentage of students making a successful transition to adult life also increased slightly.

Find the district and school nonacademic data at www.education.ky.gov on the department's Web site. Enter "non-academic" in the keyword/search box and click.

Instruction and assessment workshop in October

The Kentucky Association for Assessment Coordinators will hold its Scott Trimble Workshop on Instruction and Assessment Oct. 23-24 at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville. An early registration fee of \$125 is due by Oct. 2; after Oct. 2, registration is \$155.

www.kaac.org

Technology Counts 2006

Kentucky fares well compared to other states in technology access, use and capacity, according to *Education Week's* annual national technology study, "Technology Counts 2006." Kentucky earned an overall grade of B, but received A's in use of technology and capacity to use technology. The report noted Kentucky's high education standards and virtual high school courses.

However, the state received a C in access to technology with 3.8 students per instructional computer and 7.4 students per computer in the classroom. Kentucky also was

identified as being behind the curve in using technology to get information to the public.

The full report of "Technology Counts 2006," including charts and state-by-state tables, is at www.edweek.org/tc06 on the Web.

Best High Schools in America list released

Kentucky has eight schools listed among the top high schools in the nation, according to *Newsweek* magazine. The magazine rated the schools by using a ratio that calculates the number of advanced placement and/or international baccalaureate tests taken by all students last year, then divides that number by the number of graduating seniors.

The eight schools and their rankings are:

- Jefferson County — DuPont Manual High (130), Male Traditional High (535), Eastern High (657) and Ballard High (808)
- Ft. Thomas Independent — Highlands High (760)
- Fayette County — Dunbar High (886)
- Boone County — Ryle High (952)
- Woodford County — Woodford County High (1009)

Elaine Farris joins superintendent group

Shelby County Public Schools Superintendent Elaine Farris has been selected to join the Superintendent Leadership Network, a select group of 50 superintendents from across the southeast United States. The network, headed by BellSouth and the Schlechty Center, addresses issues for improving student achievement throughout a school system and community.



Photo by Rick McComb

The Joy of Flying

Campbell County High School teacher Lori Graham, left, and Chaermein Weathers of the Louisville Science Center use a joystick to control their airplane as they learn more about aviation during this summer's Aviation Institute in Frankfort. Teachers from all content areas learned new hands-on activities to engage students in learning mathematics, science, social studies and reading while exploring careers in the aviation industry.

Sims stretches minds and bodies at Harlow Elementary

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

Do you have memories of physical education classes that conjure up images of endless running, calisthenics and team sports? School physical education class was something most people either loved or hated.

If you were physically adept, the classes probably motivated a love of physical activities. If you were physically challenged, "gym" was a turn-off that may have convinced you to avoid any future forms of physical activity.

Today, physical education classes in public schools use a variety of strategies to stress an active and healthy lifestyle for each student.

Brock Sims, a second-year physical education teacher at Harlow Elementary, developed a fitness center during his first year at the Mercer County school. He designed the center and activities to encourage students to acquire lifelong physical fitness skills.

"My goal is to assist students at all ages and to help them learn and develop skills that will last a lifetime," said Sims.

Students are quite enthusiastic about the new approach to physical education. One student mentioned that he uses the exercises outside of class, often sharing them with family members. One impressed student said that he wants to improve his cardiovascular endurance.

Sims created a PowerPoint program that features students leading a "warm-up" routine. As students enter their weekly 45-minute physical education class, they begin their classroom routine by following the student-led stretching exercises that are projected on a screen.

Then they rotate through other conditioning stations Sims created. They learn fitness skills at each station and use a variety of equipment, including elliptical machines, stationary bikes or free weights or participate in activities like Tae Bo kicking and rope jumping before engaging in a group activity or game.

Many of the activities are centered on the F.I.T.T. principle — frequency (how often), intensity (how hard), time (length) and type (specificity). Sims attempts to equip students with knowledge, skills, capacities and values along with the enthusiasm to maintain a healthy lifestyle into adulthood.

Sims has brought several cre-

ative and innovative programs to the school, according to school leaders. His curriculum is aligned with Kentucky's core content and the National Standards for Physical Education.

Today's national standards stress the importance of movement and development of motor skills needed to perform a variety of physical activities. The standards also emphasize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and/or social interaction.

"Brock provides students an opportunity to learn how to keep physically fit in a way that will serve them their entire life," said Karen Hatfield, Harlow principal. "Healthy habits learned in the elementary years have a powerful and long-lasting influence on students as they grow to adulthood."

Sims' classroom instruction promotes lifelong physical activities designed to develop basic

movement skills, lifelong sports skills and physical fitness as well as to enhance mental, social and emotional abilities. He strives to stimulate students toward activities that are fun but have fitness as an outcome.

Students learn socially acceptable behavior and sportsmanship through participation in physical education activities and games. They also learn the relationship between exercise, rest and nutrition to growth and development.

In addition, Sims encourages the other classroom teachers at Harlow to incorporate physical activity into the regular instructional school day. He plans to provide DVDs to classroom teachers filled with short activities that students can do in the classroom to stretch or take a break.

MORE INFO . . .

Brock Sims, (859) 734-8430,
Brock.Sims@mercerkyschools.us



Photos by Rick McComb

Physical education student Phillip Wilson gets his heart rate up while working out on a Gazelle exercise machine.



During his first year of teaching, physical education teacher Brock Sims got Harlow Elementary students excited about maintaining a healthy lifestyle by creating a fitness center in the school gym. Sims and student Caitlin Mayes follow Tae Bo instruction from an exercise DVD.